



TOP CANISTER Kenmore's Intuition 28014, \$600, lets you leave the brushes behind for bare floors.

Vacuums

Our tests show several standouts and some big names to skip

UPRIGHT VACUUMS might clean up in sales, but the latest canisters are rivaling them in performance. You'll also find good smaller vacs for smaller messes. But some versions of Dirt Devil's handheld Kone make some everyday cleaning risky, and we've judged them Not Acceptable as a result.

Our latest tests show that Kenmore's new Intuition 28014 has edged out the Electrolux Oxygen EL6988 as our top-scoring canister. Impressive carpet cleaning and the ability to simply lift the wand

out of the power head for bare floors helped it clinch the top spot in our Ratings. A cage that keeps the bag from blocking the exhaust port is also a plus. But at \$600 and 26 pounds, it's pricey and heavy.

Stick vacs, sweepers, and handheld models offer easier carrying and storage for less money. Most we tested weigh under 5 pounds and cost less than \$100. Sweepers, which use motorized brushes without suction, and handheld vacuums were also relatively good at whisking away cereal and other spills too small to warrant

hauling out your full-sized vac. But most flubbed at least one of our rigorous tests.

Our tests found problems with some versions of Dirt Devil's best-selling handheld Kone Mo213, \$45, and the similar Kone Mo212, \$43. Test samples spewed sand and broken glass out of their exhaust ports and toward the faces and eyes of our testers. (See Safety Alert on facing page.)

Some upright and canister brands are touting easier handling and versatility. You'll also find robotic vacs that promise to do your cleaning for you, along with models aimed specifically at bare floors or pet hair. But our tests of more than 80 models sucked the air out of some of those promises. Here are the details:

Designs that trump performance.

Dyson's DC24 upright, \$400, is a smaller update of its swiveling-ball design. Twisting the handle steers the ball-mounted power head for easy maneuvering. But carpet cleaning was mediocre, and airflow for tools proved meager. Eureka's Capture+ upright, \$170, has a brush that extends to the sides for cleaning edges, though it didn't stand out on bare floors. And while Bissell's Pet Hair Eraser upright, \$150, delivers the pet-hair pickup it suggests, it was less impressive at other tasks.

Hybrids that disappoint. Kenmore's Premalite upright, \$400, has a handle that detaches and doubles as a tool wand. But the clip that holds it arrived broken on two models and cracked on a third during testing. That can reduce airflow and make the handle release too easily. A removable handle also gives the \$60 Shark Transformer stick vac a handheld mode that excelled at carpet cleaning. But it was only fair on carpets with the handle attached and poor at controlling dust emissions.

"Conveniences" that aren't. Dirt Devil promotes its Kruz stick vacuum, \$100, for cleaning bare floors, but it wasn't very good at that task and was poor at cleaning edges. The Electrolux Twin Clean canister, \$500, had unimpressive airflow despite its spare onboard filter. Hoover's handheld Sidewinder, \$40, has a rotating brush, but was only fair at cleaning carpets and bare floors.

A robot that rebels. Opt for the \$350 Roomba 560 and you get a vacuum that roves on its own for 35 to 45 minutes before returning to its charger. But it was among the worst in our tests at cleaning edges and corners, and sometimes ventured beyond the electronic borders we set up to contain it within rooms.

How to choose

Full-sized vacuums are still your first choice for most cleaning. While many small vacs can clean a carpet's surface, none can deep-clean imbedded dirt like larger models can. Here's what to consider:

Prioritize your cleaning. Uprights are still better overall on carpets, a vacuum's toughest job. But canisters remain tops for cleaning bare floors, stairs, drapes, and upholstery. Some also did well in our carpet tests.

Be picky about features. Uprights and canisters with a bag hold more dirt than bagless vacs and spread less dust when emptied, a concern if you have allergies or respiratory problems. Manual pile-height adjustment lets you raise or lower the brush for carpets and bare floors, while a brush on/off switch helps prevent scratching floors and scattering debris. Vacs with a bag and brush switch are shown in the Ratings on page 36.

Choose a cord for bigger jobs. While cordless sweepers ran up to 49 minutes per charge, most small cordless vacs ranged from 6 to 15 minutes. While that might be fine for most small spills, you'll probably prefer a corded vacuum for larger ones.

SAFETY ALERT

2 Dirt Devil Kone models Not Acceptable

Dirt Devil calls its best-selling, handheld Kone Mo213, \$45, and similar Mo212, \$43, "an elegant, sculptural form that can be left on display." Our tests suggest some Kone owners should do precisely that.

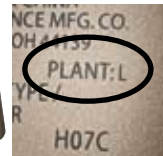
Four of the Mo213 and two of the Mo212 models threw some of the sand they picked up out of their exhaust ports at testers' faces and eyes, something we didn't find with other hand vacs. We used fine, uniform silica sand as we do with all vacuums to test carpet and floor cleaning. To better assess the models' real-world risks, we also used sand found in many backyards and glass from broken lightbulbs—common cleaning messes. Both models released small particles of each in the same way.

We notified the Consumer Product Safety Commission and TTI Floor Care, which owns the Dirt Devil brand. TTI confirmed that both models share the same design and subsequently did its own tests with silica sand. The company then told us its tests showed "blow-by" in certain units and linked it to an undersized filter adapter on some Kones with an "L" on the unit and box (see photos). The Mo213 models with a "J" are from a different plant and have a better-sealing adapter; the part fits all "L" versions, including the Mo212, TTI said. The company told us it had

received no injury reports and believes the "blow-by" does not pose an issue but would send the newer part free of cost to owners who asked for it.

Our tests show that newer, "J" units and older, "L" versions we retrofitted with the newer filter adapter kept fine silica sand contained. But our earlier findings remain troubling given that roughly 1 million Kones were produced and that L-code units were still in stores at press time. Because using a handheld vac typically puts your face and eyes near the machine, we believe the L-code Dirt Devil Kone Mo213 and all Mo212 models pose a safety risk and we have judged them Not Acceptable.

We believe owners of L-code models should get the improved adapter without having to ask, and that TTI should publicize its fix and send it to all registered owners. We've asked the CPSC to open an investigation. If you own an L-code Mo213 or any Mo212, don't use it until you install the improved adapter. Call 800-321-1134 for the part.



Choose an upright or canister for most cleaning and a small vac as a backup



UPRIGHTS

Best for deep-cleaning carpets. They're lower-priced and easier to store than canisters overall.

But you must push and pull the entire machine for most floor cleaning. Uprights are also less stable than canisters when cleaning on stairs.

Price \$70 to \$1,350.



CANISTERS

Best for bare floors, stairs, drapes, and upholstery. More stable on stairs. The power head fits better under furniture.

But canister vacs tend to be bulkier, pricier, and harder to store than upright models.

Price \$170 to \$1,900.



STICK VACS

Best for cleaning small messes from surfaces without stooping. Many use suction only, though some have a revolving brush.

But most were unimpressive at even surface carpet cleaning. Some are priced as high as upright vacuums.

Price \$20 to \$120.

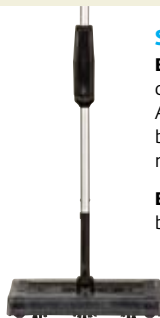


HANDHELD VACS

Best for small, localized spills. Many did well at light carpet, floor, and edge cleaning.

But cordless vacs have limited run and long recharge times. All require stooping and put you close to dust and debris.

Price \$15 to \$200.



SWEEPERS/BROOMS

Best for light surface cleaning without stooping. A suctionless revolving brush makes some relatively quiet.

But stick vacs tend to be better on floors, handhelds on carpets and edges. Brooms require effort.

Price \$10 to \$100.



ROBOTIC VACS

Best for minimal effort between vacuuming with a regular vac in uncluttered rooms.

But they're pricey as a group and are time-consuming to set up. Most missed edges and corners in our tests.

Price \$130 to \$1,800.

Overview

Top uprights and canisters tend to do best on carpets, the toughest and most common cleaning. Most are also on the heavy side, though you'll find some lighter alternatives.

✓ CR Best Buy

These models offer the best combination of performance and price. All are Recommended.

✓ Recommended

These are high-performing models that stand out for the reasons below.

Best uprights for most:

A1 Kenmore \$350 **CR Best Buy**

A2 Kenmore \$350 **CR Best Buy**

A3 Eureka \$150 **CR Best Buy**

A7 Eureka \$140

Both Kenmores are tops for all-around cleaning and pet hair. **A1** is quieter and better on carpets; **A2** is bagless. The Eureka's trade some versatility for a lower price. Between them, **A3** offers better bare-floor performance; **A7** is better on carpets and has a bit more airflow.

If less weight is worth some trade-offs:

A5 Riccar \$350

A19 Bissell \$120

Both of these upright vacuums weigh less than 20 pounds. The **A5** is very light but doesn't accept tools. Also consider the **A14** for its carpet cleaning. Choose the bagless **A19** for its ability to accept tools, its quieter running, and its low price. The Hoover A6 and A16 look attractive, but there are more-reliable brands of uprights.

Best canisters for most:

B1 Kenmore \$600

B2 Electrolux \$400

B5 Kenmore \$300 **CR Best Buy**

B6 Hoover \$250 **CR Best Buy**

B15 Hoover \$170

B1 and **B2** are tops for all major cleaning.

Between **B5** and **B6**, pick the Kenmore for its easier handling and pet-hair performance, the Hoover for its higher airflow for tools.

B15 is among the least-expensive canisters sold, though you pay a price in carpet cleaning and handling.

Ratings Vacuums

In performance order, within types. (Types designated A, B, etc.)

● Excellent
● Very good
○ Good
○ Fair
● Poor

		Brand & model	Price	Overall score	Weight (lb.)	Test results							Features
Recommendation	Rank	Similar models, in small type, are comparable to tested model.				Carpet	Bare floors	Tool airflow	Noise	Emissions	Handling	Pet hair	Bag
													Brush on/off switch

A UPRIGHTS These tend to be better for carpets and are easier to store.

✓	1	Kenmore (Sears) Progressive 35922 35923	\$ 350	75	21	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
✓	2	Kenmore (Sears) Progressive 36932 36933	350	70	22	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●
✓	3	Eureka Boss Smart Vac 4870 []	150	68	20	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●
	4	Kirby Sentria []	1,350	67	25	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
✓	5	Riccar SupraLite RSL3 Simplicity F3500	350	66	9	●	●	②	●	○	●	●	●
	6	Hoover Tempo Widepath U5140-900	70	66	16	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	●
✓	7	Eureka Boss 4D 5893 []	140	65	24	●	○	●	○	●	●	●	●
	8	Riccar Brilliance Premium Simplicity Synchrony Premium	850	65	20	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	9	Dyson DC17 Absolute Animal DC17 Asthma/Allergy	550	65	21	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●
	10	Oreck XL21-750 Titanium	750	64	11	○	●	②	○	●	●	○	●
	11	Panasonic AeroBlast MC-UL975	700	64	22	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	●
	12	Hoover WindTunnel Bagless Self Propelled U6630-900 U6634-900 []	250	63	25	●	●	○	○	○	●	●	●
	13	Bissell Healthy Home 5770 5990, 5770-H	250	63	26	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	●
	14	Riccar SupraLite RSL4 Simplicity F3600	450	63	9	●	●	②	●	○	●	●	●
	15	Hoover Mach5 U5194-900	200	62	24	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
	16	Hoover EmPower U5262-910 U5265-900, U5269-900 []	100	62	17	●	●	○	○	●	○	○	○
	17	Dyson DC14 Complete DC14 Animal, All Floors	440	62	19	○	●	●	○	●	○	○	●
✓	18	Bissell Pet Hair Eraser 3920 3920-9	150	61	21	●	○	○	○	●	○	●	●
✓	19	Bissell Momentum 82G7 82G72, 82G7H	120	61	18	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	●
	20	Dyson DC07 All Floors DC07 Animal	400	60	20	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
	21	Dyson DC18 Slim	470	60	16	○	●	○	○	●	○	○	●
	22	Dyson DC24 Ball All Floors	400	57	12	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
	23	Bissell Lift-Off Revolution Turbo 3760-1 3760-2, 3760-3, 3760-4, 6860-H, 4220-9	170	57	23	○	●	○	○	●	●	○	●
	24	Eureka Capture+ 8851 [] 8853 []	170	56	24	○	○	●	○	●	●	●	●
	25	Kenmore (Sears) Premalite 37060	400	56	16	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	●
	26	Bissell Velocity 75B21	130	56	19	●	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
	27	Dirt Devil Ultra Vision Turbo M087305	100	55	20	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○
	28	Dirt Devil i M130000	250	54	21	○	●	●	○	●	○	○	○
	29	Hoover WindTunnel Cyclonic U5780-900	200	54	23	○	●	●	○	●	○	○	○
	30	Panasonic AeroSpin MC-UL675	170	53	25	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
	31	Oreck XL Deluxe U3760HH	400	51	10	○	●	②	○	●	○	○	○
	32	Hoover Elite Rewind U5507-900	100	50	18	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	33	Halo UVX	370	50	17	○	●	②	○	●	○	○	○

A1 Kenmore



A3 Eureka



A5 Riccar



B2 Electrolux



B6 Hoover



		Brand & model	Price	Overall score	Weight (lb.)	Test results							Features	
Recommendation	Rank					Carpet	Bare floors	Tool airflow	Noise	Emissions	Handling	Pet hair	Bag	Brush on/off switch

A UPRIGHTS *continued*

34	Hoover Fold Away Widepath U5175-900 [3]	\$ 80	48	16	○	●	●	○	●	○	○		
35	Dirt Devil Reaction M110000 [4]	150	47	20	●	●	○	●	●	●	●		
36	Koblenz U-610	270	39	19	○	●	[2]	●	●	●	○	●	

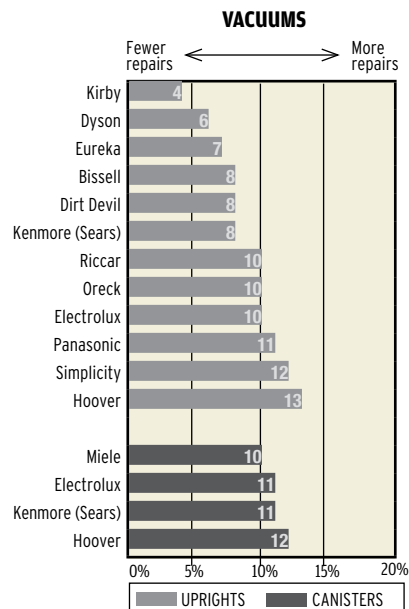
B CANISTERS These tend to be easier to use with tools and are more stable on stairs.

✓	1	Kenmore (Sears) Intuition 28014 28015	\$ 600	73	26	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
✓	2	Electrolux Oxygen EL6988 []	400	71	22	●	●	○	●	○	●	●	●
	3	Electrolux Oxygen3 Ultra EL7020 []	500	68	24	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
	4	Kenmore (Sears) Progressive 27914 27915	500	68	23	○	●	○	●	○	●	●	●
✓	5	Kenmore (Sears) Progressive 27514 27515, 28614, 28615	300	67	22	●	●	○	○	●	○	●	●
✓	6	Hoover WindTunnel Bagless S3765-040 S3755	250	66	22	●	●	○	○	●	○	●	●
	7	Miele Callisto S5280 S5281	880	66	20	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	●
	8	SEBO air belt C3.1	970	66	26	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	●
	9	Bosch Formula Electro Duo Hepa BSG71360UC	500	66	17	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●
	10	Riccar 1700 Simplicity S36	900	65	27	○	●	○	○	○	●	●	●
	11	Miele Plus S251	600	65	19	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	12	Oreck Dutch Tech DTX1400B	900	65	24	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	13	Electrolux Twin Clean EL7055 []	500	63	26	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	14	Miele Direct Connect S514	700	62	20	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
✓	15	Hoover Duros S3590	170	61	22	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	16	Aerus Lux Guardian C154E	1,500	59	25	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	17	Dyson DC21 Stowaway [3]	500	59	23	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	18	Electrolux Harmony EL6985 []	300	59	17	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	19	Rainbow e-series E2	1,900	58	33	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	20	Metropolitan Professionals ADM-4PNHSF	450	57	22	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	21	Aerus Lux Legacy C153C	1,000	55	21	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●
	22	Hoover Constellation S3345	200	53	17	○	●	○	○	○	○	●	●

[1] Self-propelled. [2] Does not accept tools. [3] Folds for storage. [4] This model's Turbo Tool accessory (date codes J7060 through J7365) was recalled because pieces inside can break and be ejected, posing a laceration hazard. Recall does not affect the vacuum.

Most and least reliable

Kirby has been among the more reliable brands of upright vacuums. In general, canisters have been more repair-prone than uprights. That's what we found when we asked 135,000 readers who bought a vacuum between 2003 and 2007 about their experiences. The graph below shows the percentage of vacuum brands that needed a repair or had a serious problem. (Belt replacement isn't included because it's usually an inexpensive fix.) Differences of less than 3 points aren't meaningful, and we've adjusted the data to eliminate differences linked solely to age and use. Models within a brand may vary, and design or manufacture changes may affect future reliability. Still, choosing a brand with a good repair history can improve your odds of getting a reliable model.



Guide to the Ratings

Overall score mainly reflects cleaning, airflow, handling, noise, and emissions. Displayed scores are rounded; models are listed by precise overall score. Scores for previously tested models may vary from past tests due to testing or scoring changes. **Carpet** gauges lifting embedded talc and sand from medium-pile carpet. **Bare floors** denotes vacuuming sand without dispersing. **Tool airflow** measures airflow through hose, starting with empty bag or bin, with increasing

amounts of dust-simulating wood flour. **Noise** reflects decibel-meter results; models scored poor mandate hearing protection. **Emissions** is release of small particles with motor on, with and without vacuuming. **Handling** is ease of pushing, pulling, carrying. **Pet hair** is pickup on medium-pile carpet. **Weight** is vacuum and onboard tools. **Price** is approximate retail. Under brand & model, brackets denote availability of different colors and/or retailer exclusivity.



Overview

Like uprights and canisters, the best small vacs tend to be best at tougher carpet cleaning. But none can deep-clean carpets like their larger cousins, so think of them as backup vacs.

✓ CR Best Buy

These models offer the best combination of performance and price. All are Recommended.

✓ Recommended

These are high-performing models that stand out for the reasons below.

Best stick vacs for most:

A1 Hoover \$40

A2 Dirt Devil \$40

Stick vacs save you the hassle of bending or kneeling, though none was flawless. The corded **A1** and **A2** were best on both carpets and pet hair—two especially tough cleaning tasks. The Hoover offers fine edge cleaning with lots of dust emissions; the Dirt Devil trades edge cleaning for carpet performance.

Best hand vacs for most:

B1 Black & Decker \$60

B3 Black & Decker \$30

B7 Dirt Devil \$50

All weigh 4 pounds or less. Between the cordless **B1** and **B7**, choose the Black & Decker for its pet-hair pickup, the Dirt Devil for its lighter weight and fine all-around performance. The corded **B3** offers unlimited run time, though it emitted some of what it picked up into the air. Also consider the pricey **B6** if pet hair is an issue.

Best sweepers and brooms for most:

C1 Dirt Devil \$50

C2 Swivel Sweeper \$35

These cordless cleaners ran 17 to 49 minutes per charge in our tests. Strong carpet and pet-hair cleaning make the **C1** our top choice, though it's hardest to use because you hold and wield this motorized broom like the old-fashioned kind. Using the lighter, wheeled **C2** is easier, though you give up some performance overall.

Ratings Small vacuums

In performance order, within types. (Types designated A, B, etc.)

● Excellent
● Very good
○ Good
○ Fair
● Poor

		Brand & model	Price	Overall score	Weight (lb.)	Test results								
Recommendation	Rank	Similar models, in small type, are comparable to tested model.				Run time (min.)	Charge time (hr.)	Carpet	Bare floors	Edges	Ease of use	Emissions	Noise	Pet hair

A STICK VACS These corded and cordless vacs are fine for short-pile carpets and floors.

✓	1	Hoover Flair S2200	\$ 40	68	7	NA	NA	○	●	●	●	○	○	●
✓	2	Dirt Devil Power Stick M084100	40	67	7	NA	NA	○	●	●	●	○	○	●
	3	Shark Transformer EP602	60	56	8	NA	NA	○	●	●	●	○	○	○
	4	Dirt Devil KRUZ M0313SLV	100	48	5	12	16	NA	○	●	●	○	○	NA
	5	Eureka Quick-Up 96D	40	45	4	11	14	●	○	●	○	○	○	○
	6	Electrolux Ergorapido EL1005	100	35	6	11	15	●	○	●	○	○	○	○
	7	Electrolux Pronto EL1000[]	100	32	6	10	12	●	○	●	○	○	○	○

B HAND VACS These are best for spot-cleaning small spaces.

✓	1	Black & Decker Pivot PHV1800	60	82	4	10	16	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
	2	Electrolux Ergorapido EL1005 []	100	81	3	12	15	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
✓	3	Black & Decker Pet Series Retriever HV9010P	30	81	4	NA	NA	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
	4	Shark Transformer EP602 []	60	77	7	NA	NA	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
	5	Electrolux Pronto EL1000[] []	100	77	2	12	12	○	●	●	○	○	○	○
✓	6	Dyson Root 6 DC16 All Floors	150	76	3	6	3	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
	7	Dirt Devil Kurv M0216	50	74	2	15	16	●	○	●	○	○	○	○
	8	DirtTamer Ultima V2510	70	68	3	9	10	●	○	●	○	○	○	○
	9	Shark Cordless SV736	40	65	3	14	16	○	○	●	○	○	○	○
	10	Hoover Sidewinder S1156[]	40	53	4	NA	NA	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

C SWEEPERS/BROOMS These are best for quieter cleaning without a cord.

✓	1	Dirt Devil Broom Vac MBV2030[]	50	67	4	17	16	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
✓	2	Swivel Sweeper	35	67	2	28	6	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	3	Bissell Perfect Sweep Turbo 2880	40	65	4	49	12	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	4	Shark Cordless VX3	80	61	5	23	12	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

NOT ACCEPTABLE Handheld **Dirt Devil** Kone M0213 (L-code only) and similar M0212. These models threw particles of picked-up sand and glass out of their exhaust ports, posing a safety risk to testers' faces and eyes. See Safety Alert on page 35 for more details.

[] Comes as part of tested stick vac.

Guide to the Ratings

Overall score mainly reflects surface and edge cleaning, ease of use, emissions, noise, and run and charge times. Displayed scores are rounded; models are listed by precise overall score. Scores for previously tested models may vary from past tests due to testing or scoring changes. **Carpet** is how well models removed surface debris from medium-pile carpet. **Bare floors** denotes removal of surface debris from tile set in grout. **Edges** is how well units picked up debris from where floor meets walls. **Ease of use** is bag capacity, operating effort, and clearance under furniture. **Emissions** is release of small particles with motor on, with and without vacuuming. **Noise** reflects decibel-meter results; models scored poor mandate hearing protection. **Pet hair** is pickup on medium-pile carpet. **Weight** is rounded to nearest pound, with batteries (cordless models). **Run time** is average per charge (cordless). **Charge time** (cordless) is time to reach full charge, according to manufacturers. **Price** is approximate retail. Under brand & model, brackets denote color availability and/or retailer exclusivity.